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Newport, RI

JOINT CSAR—DOES THE CURRENT ORGANIZATION PROVIDE THE JOINT TASK  
FORCE WITH THE MOST EFFECTIVE TOOLS?

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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4 February 2002

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## Report Documentation Page

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**Abstract**

The recovery of isolated military or civilian personnel has been a primary concern for the U.S. combatant commanders. Unfortunately, throughout history, conventional combat search and rescue (CSAR) forces within the Department of Defense have demonstrated a lack of integrated capability in peacetime. As a result, they have undertaken extreme efforts to reorganize, buildup, and employ an ad hoc CSAR force during crisis action planning for combat operations. All military services contribute in preparing for, and responding to, the Joint Force Commanders (JFC) requirement to recover isolated personnel but without one commander in charge to ensure unity of command and unity of effort. Current joint doctrine directs each military service, as well as Special Operations Command (SOCOM), to be responsible for their own CSAR capability, but it does not fully address CSAR unity of effort among the services. Therefore, commanders have resorted to the just do something mentality and favored the use of special operations forces (SOF) to conduct CSAR based on their multifaceted capabilities. Presently, using SOF as the primary CSAR force has been the trend, but this does not fix the CSAR duplication of effort within the military services. This has left the U.S. military ill-prepared to effectively conduct joint CSAR missions for the JFC. This paper will propose the development of a Joint CSAR Task Force (JCSARTF) to integrate the military services CSAR capabilities underneath one commander, the CINC's theater SOC, which will streamline the JFC's capability. In addition, to support this JCSARTF concept, the consolidation of the Air Forces conventional and SOF CSAR capabilities underneath SOCOM can improve the unity of command and effort for the JFC's CSAR mission. The essential CSAR capabilities are in our services; they just need to be reorganized and put in their proper place to ensure an effective CSAR standing force for the warfighting CINC.

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## **ABSTRACT**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

**ACC**—Air Combat Command  
**AFSOC**—Air Force Special Operations Command (in theater, Component)  
**AFSOF**—Air Force Special Operations Forces  
**ARS**—Air Rescue Service  
**ARSOF**—Army Special Operations Forces  
**AOR**—Area of Responsibility  
**C<sup>2</sup>**—Command and Control  
**CINC**—Commander in Chief  
**CSAR**—Combat Search and Rescue  
**COMJTF**—Commander, Joint Task Force  
**COMSOC**—Commander, Special Operations Command (in theater, Component)  
**CVBG**—Carrier Battle Group  
**DOD**—Department of Defense  
**GNA**—Goldwater-Nichols Act  
**JCS**—Joint Chiefs of Staff  
**JCSARTF**—Joint Combat Search and Rescue Task Force  
**JFACC**—Joint Force Air Component Commander  
**JFC**—Joint Force Commander  
**JFMCC**—Joint Force Maritime Component Commander  
**JFLCC**—Joint Force Land Component Commander  
**JFSOCC**—Joint Forces Special Operations Component Commander  
**JOA**—Joint Operations Area  
**JOC**—Joint Operations Center (Special operations component)  
**JSOTF**—Joint Special Operations Task Force  
**JSRC**—Joint Search and Rescue Center  
**JTF**—Joint Task Force  
**LIMFACs**—Limiting Factors  
**MAGTF**—Marine Air-Ground Task Forces  
**NCA**—National Command Authorities  
**NSW**—Naval Special Warfare  
**OPCON**—Operational Control  
**PJ**—Pararescue Personnel  
**RCC**—Rescue Coordination Center  
**ROLE**—Rescue Operations Liaison Element  
**SAR**—Search and Rescue  
**SEAL**—Sea-Air-Land (Team)  
**SF**—Special Forces  
**SOC**—Special Operations Command  
**SOF**—Special Operations Forces  
**SOLE**—Special Operations Liaison Element  
**SOW**—Special Operations Wing  
**STT**—Special Tactics Team  
**TACON**—Tactical Control  
**USCINCSOC**—Commander in Chief, United States Special Operations Command

We have a moral and ethical obligation to those we put in harm's way, to clearly articulate personnel recovery policy, doctrine, and plans, and put the resources in place so that we can recover our isolated personnel safely and expeditiously.

VADM Martin Mayer, DCINC, US Joint Forces Command  
*DOD Defense Personnel Recovery Conference, 22 January 2001*

## I

### INTRODUCTION

#### *Joint Force Commander's CSAR Responsibility*

One of the Joint Force Commander's (JFC) most important priorities is to provide the Joint Task Force (JTF) with an effective combat search and rescue (CSAR) force in order to recover isolated personnel and prevent Prisoners of War (POW) and hostage situations during war or military operations other than war. By directive, "each military service and Special Operations Command (SOCOM) are responsible for performing CSAR in support of their own operations, consistent with their assigned functions"<sup>1</sup> and if directed by the JFC, support their sister services' missions. Therefore, the JFCs have primary authority and responsibility for CSAR in support of U.S. forces within their areas of responsibility (AORs)/joint operations areas (JOAs). To accomplish the CSAR mission, the JFC should take into account the availability and capabilities of each military service to perform the overall CSAR mission.<sup>2</sup> This guidance gives the perception that the JFC might not have an integrated force capable of conducting CSAR in wartime.

#### *CSAR Problem and Thesis*

Does the current organization provide the JTF with the most effective tools to accomplish the CSAR mission for all the services in wartime? During the past 50 years, tremendous improvements in CSAR capabilities have taken place. However, in the 1990's the capabilities have suffered due to higher priorities within the military services.<sup>3</sup> This has



been evident during more recent operations in Southwest Asia, Bosnia, Serbia, and Afghanistan, where there have been repeated CSAR deficiencies in providing an effective force for personnel recovery of isolated personnel.<sup>4</sup> The JFC has compensated for CSAR shortcomings by tasking special operations forces (SOF) as the primary CSAR force. SOF offers unique conventional and unconventional capabilities in the low, medium, and high threat environment. Even though SOF normally brings an “ad hoc” organization, it provides a “911 panic button” and “one stop shopping” capability for multifaceted missions. These SOF capabilities have resulted in numerous successful rescues and, therefore, have made SOF the JFC force of choice for CSAR. However, since CSAR is a collateral mission and not a core mission for SOF, tasking SOF as the primary CSAR provider for the JTF could potentially deter SOF from their primary missions and dangerously limit the JFC response to special operations missions.

This paper will address joint CSAR deficiencies and propose a solution to improve the commander in chief's (CINC's) CSAR capabilities. Specifically, it will propose the development of a Joint CSAR Task Force (JCSARTF) to integrate the military services' CSAR capabilities underneath the CINC's Special Operations Command (SOC) component commander in peacetime—a step that will streamline the JFC's capability for wartime.<sup>5</sup> In addition, to sustain this JCSARTF concept, the consolidation of the Air Force's CSAR forces and the Air Force's Special Operation Force's (AFSOF) CSAR capabilities underneath SOCOM can improve the unity of command and effort for the JFC's CSAR mission.<sup>6</sup> To support this thesis, the paper will examine current joint doctrine and each military service's CSAR capabilities. Moreover, it will analyze CSAR lessons learned from recent contingencies and offer recommendations to reduce the CSAR redundancy within the services and enhance the JFC CSAR capability in wartime.

### *CSAR Background*

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the U.S. military halfheartedly supported dedicated CSAR forces to its war efforts. Great advancements in the CSAR mission were made during WWII with the Army Air Corps, the Korean War with the Air Rescue Service (ARS), and the Vietnam War with the Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service (ARRS). Moreover, each service provided an organic CSAR capability to recover personnel, but CSAR did not exist as a primary mission for them. In addition, as evidenced by funding priorities, a robust CSAR capability within each service normally was an afterthought for military leadership.<sup>7</sup> This oversight contributed to the lack of proper training and organization of CSAR forces in peacetime. Consequently, this left the military ill-prepared for the CSAR mission and normally resulted in an ad hoc organization to conduct multiple missions without a dedicated CSAR capability.

During Vietnam, although the Air Force's ARRS was considered the primary CSAR provider, the Navy provided primary coverage for the Gulf of Tonkin and South China Sea while the Army provided additional capability overland.<sup>8</sup> Also, each service still had to provide CSAR for its own forces and during almost any circumstance, any of the services would have to respond to "hot" isolated personnel situations depending on local availability. For example, during the recovery efforts of Bat 21 (Lt Col Iceal "Gene" Hambleton) in Vietnam, several CSAR assets and support forces were diverted for the CSAR mission. Although this CSAR mission has been lauded by some as "the greatest combat search and rescue effort ever undertaken,"<sup>9</sup> it cost 11 U.S. servicemen's lives and several aircraft. Some might argue the military should not take this type of lofty risk. However, the U.S. has shown historically it resolves to take risks to prevent isolated personnel from getting into enemy hands and being used as leverage tools or human shields.<sup>10</sup>

Visions of American POWs during operations in Vietnam, the Gulf War, Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo have had major impacts on U.S. public opinion.<sup>11</sup> A POW or hostage situation can cause public relations nightmares for politicians and military commanders. Therefore, during a personnel recovery situation, leaders tend to provide every available asset to accomplish personnel recovery missions to prevent exploitation of the isolated personnel by the adversary and limit negative public opinion. The political and military leadership understand that CSAR is a risky business, but they are normally willing to take additional risks to recover personnel from the adversary—as evidenced in SS Mayaguez/Koh Tang Island recovery mission and the failed attempt to recover American hostages in Iran (Desert One).<sup>12</sup> In both of these cases, the operations highlighted deficiencies in CSAR and special operations capabilities. Lessons learned from the catastrophic Desert One mission revealed significant problems with joint planning, equipment, tactics, and leadership—contributing to the Department of Defense (DOD) reform under the Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act of 1986.<sup>13</sup>

## **II**

### **ANALYSIS OF CSAR**

The Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act of 1986, informally called the Goldwater-Nichols Act (GNA), was the most comprehensive defense reorganization package enacted since the 1947 National Security Act. It was based on DOD lessons learned from post WWII to Urgent Fury operations conducted in Grenada. The GNA affected the entire DOD and was designed to accelerate the unification of the U.S. armed forces by fundamentally altering the manner in which the military services were trained, commanded, and employed.<sup>14</sup> For example, the act established unified COMBATANT commands with specific responsibilities, to include the establishment of a separate special operations command

independent from the other services and with its own funding—SOCOM. Moreover, the act required all services to incorporate individual doctrines into single joint publications to “enhance the effectiveness of the armed forces,” including joint CSAR doctrine.<sup>15</sup>

### *Policy, Doctrine, and Organization*

Doctrine for joint CSAR has been carefully designed around DOD Directive 2310.2.

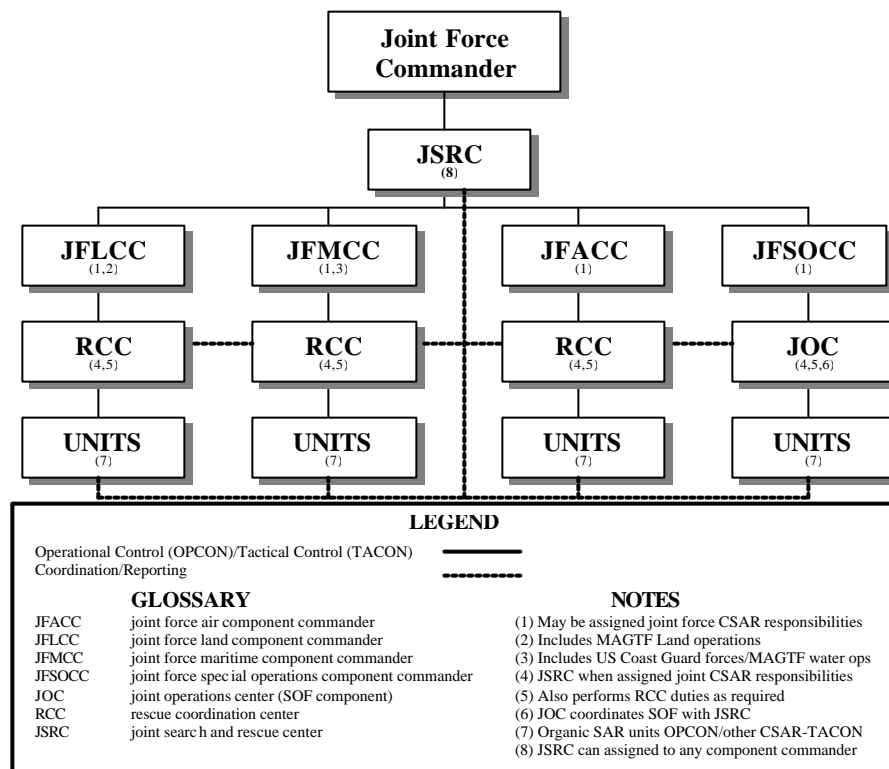
This directive established the DOD policy for personnel recovery and states that:

Preserving the lives and well-being of US military, DOD civilian and contract service employees placed in danger of being isolated, beleaguered, detained, captured or having to evade while participating in a U.S.-sponsored activity or mission is one the highest priorities of the DOD. The DOD has a moral obligation to protect its personnel, prevent exploitation of its personnel by adversaries, and reduce the potential for captured personnel being used as leverage against the U.S.

This directive set the foundation for Joint Pub 3-50.2, Doctrine for Joint CSAR, which dictates the authoritative guidance to conduct CSAR for all services and SOCOM. In addition, this CSAR publication “incorporates joint and service doctrine into a single-source publication and provides the guidance and procedures necessary to plan, coordinate, and conduct a timely and tailored joint combat CSAR response across the range of military operations.”<sup>16</sup> Joint CSAR Doctrine represents an honest effort to address pre-Gulf War CSAR issues, but it does not fully synthesize the services' and SOCOM's capabilities into a sound organization to provide for unity of effort, centralized planning and direction, and decentralized execution.<sup>17</sup>

As previously noted, each service and SOCOM are directed to provide their own dedicated CSAR capabilities. In doing so, each theater component commander has to provide an organic CSAR command and control (C<sup>2</sup>) infrastructure ready to conduct personnel recoveries for the JFC. This entails each component command having trained personnel to man and operate its own Rescue Coordination Center (RCC) and provide CSAR expertise to

the JFC's Joint Search and Rescue Center (JSRC). The RCC coordinates all component's CSAR activities, including coordination with the JSRC and other components RCCs.<sup>18</sup> As depicted in Figure 1, the JFC will normally exercise C<sup>2</sup> of all forces committed to the CSAR mission through a designated component commander using its RCC as the JSRC.



**Figure 1. JCSAR Command Relationships (Functional Components)<sup>19</sup>**

The designated JSRC commander relies on each component representative's expertise as the conduit between each RCC and JSRC. These component representatives should be the link for determining what CSAR capabilities are available or needed for the CSAR effort. In theory, all of these fluid components of the CSAR C<sup>2</sup> organization should collaborate and give the JSRC commander enough information to coordinate and execute the CSAR operation for the JFC. Joint Pub 3-50.2 describes the joint CSAR C<sup>2</sup> in more detail and

attempts to give the JFC the best guidance to organize his forces, but it does not fully consider the capability and availability of CSAR forces.<sup>20</sup>

### *Services' Capabilities*

Since the CSAR missions are viewed differently in the each service and SOCOM, each of them offer varying levels of CSAR capabilities for the JFC. The following priorities given to CSAR by service and SOCOM highlight the disparity:<sup>21</sup>

- Army--secondary mission
- Navy--primary mission/secondary priority
- Marines--implied tasking
- Air Force--primary mission
- SOCOM--collateral mission

The Army's CSAR capabilities are considered limited due to the lack of dedicated CSAR units or aircraft. The Army's aviation, medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) units, and watercraft units could be assigned CSAR missions, but they should only be used in a semipermissive or nonpermissive operational environment with adequate protection.<sup>22</sup> The organic capability within the Army is a viable CSAR option during certain circumstances for JFC. However, due to insufficient CSAR training and quantities of rescue platforms such as HH-60, CH-47, and UH-1 aircraft, the Army is not considered a primary CSAR force provider for the JFC.

The Navy considers CSAR a primary mission, but more than half of its dedicated CSAR capabilities remain in the Naval Reserves, within its helicopter combat support squadrons (HCS).<sup>23</sup> The remaining CSAR assets are within the organic carrier battle group (CVBG) CSAR capability, which consist of selected units from the Navy's helicopter anti-submarine warfare squadrons (HS). These units are highly trained to conduct day and night

CSAR and naval special warfare (NSW) operations in a hostile environment.<sup>24</sup> This results in the CVBG CSAR-capable units having multiple primary missions, potentially causing prioritization problems during strike missions that use the same assets. In addition, the Navy's CSAR capabilities have air refueling limitations that restrict their capability for long-range missions.<sup>25</sup>

The Marines also have limited numbers of helicopters able to air refuel which hampers their extended range capability for CSAR and tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel (TRAP) missions. As demonstrated in the Captain Scott O'Grady personnel recovery mission during the Bosnia conflict, the Marines have the assets and TRAP capabilities to perform CSAR.<sup>26</sup> However, "the Marine air-ground task forces (MAGTFs) do not routinely train to conduct the search portion of CSAR and view CSAR as an implied tasking that should not detract from primary functions."<sup>27</sup> The Marines can support the JFC's CSAR mission with its TRAP capabilities, but the JFC would have to weigh the priority of missions using the MAGTF as a primary CSAR force.

Unlike the Marines, the Air Force considers CSAR a primary mission and recently has been the key CSAR force in Southwest Asia supporting missions in the Persian Gulf.<sup>28</sup> Up to 1999, the Air Force had been DOD's executive agent for personnel recovery with Air Combat Command (ACC) assigned as the office of primary responsibility (OPR). In this capacity, the Air Force has possessed the largest force structure dedicated to the CSAR mission. It consists of 100 HH-60s (air-refueling capable) and 30 HC-130s (not air refueling capable) of which approximately 60 percent are assigned to the National Guard and Reserves.<sup>29</sup> In addition to this hardware, the Air Force supports the JFC's CSAR mission with specially trained pararescue forces (PJs), RCC controllers, and SAR duty officers. In theory, these CSAR capabilities were designed to provide a core of rescue forces dedicated to

the Combat Air Forces and JTF commander, but they have taken a backseat to budget priorities.<sup>30</sup> This has resulted in the Air Force being unable to produce sufficient amounts of PJs, RCCs, and properly equipped helicopters for high-threat or all-weather missions. More significantly, as the DOD's executive agent, the Air Force had been unable to fulfill its role as DOD's joint CSAR integrator for all the services.<sup>31</sup> Similar to the other services' limitations, the Air Force's readiness level has not fully supported the warfighting CINC's CSAR requirement—prompting the JFC to turn to SOF capabilities during wartime.

SOF's CSAR capabilities are inherent in SOCOM's forces, equipment, and training.<sup>32</sup> The command offers the JFC a joint CSAR capability that can include AFSOF, Army SOF, and Naval Special Warfare units which can operate in an all-weather and high threat environments. SOCOM has over 60 MC-130 aircraft and 80 Army and Air Force helicopters (MH-53, 47, 60) which all perform multiple missions including air refueling for extended range operations. In addition, these aircraft and over 25 AC-130 close air support gunships provide support to Navy Sea-Land-Air (SEAL), Army SOF, and Air Force Special Tactics teams when conducting their collateral CSAR mission.<sup>33</sup> More importantly, dedicated SOF C<sup>2</sup> elements (SOCCE) and SOF liaison elements (SOLE) provide the Joint Special Operations Component Commander (JFSOCC) robust C<sup>2</sup> for all its forces. Since SOF is not manned or trained to conduct CSAR as a primary mission, tasking SOF as the only CSAR provider could limit SOF ability to respond to other missions directed by the JFC.<sup>34</sup>

All services and SOCOM capabilities could be amalgamated to form a potent CSAR force. However, due to the capability limitations discussed, it is difficult to direct each service to be a primary CSAR provider. Having each service provide robust CSAR capabilities is redundant. It does not provide unity of command, unity of effort, or simplicity to carry out the CSAR mission. CSAR joint doctrine makes a lot of assumptions with regard



to CSAR capabilities and specifically states what CSAR missions the services might be tasked with. The same doctrine that directs services' CSAR responsibilities and suggests available capabilities, states a caveat about operational constraints and contradicts itself:

Typical operational constraints that pertain to joint CSAR operations include a limited capability utilizing manned airborne assets to conduct the search portion of CSAR in a medium-to-high threat environment, a scarcity of dedicated CSAR resources in service forces, and shortages of trained CSAR coordinators to staff JSRCs and component RCCs....Deployed service forces may have very little organic CSAR capability but may be tasked to provide certain CSAR-capable resources in support of another service force....Such assignments should not interfere with a unit or component primary mission and should be tasked by appropriate authority, normally a JFC.

These statements have been in the CSAR doctrine publication since its 1991 inception and remain in the latest 2002 draft. While this publication provides CSAR guidance for JFCs, lessons learned from the Gulf War to the current war in Afghanistan show that CSAR organization and capabilities still have not coalesced into an effective force for the warfighting CINC.

### *Lessons Learned*

During recent conflicts the JFC has looked into his "CSAR toolbox" and has noticed that many CSAR capabilities or tools are scattered throughout the services and are not organized into an "off the shelf" joint force multiplier. This was displayed during the Gulf War when the primary JFC's CSAR forces, such as the Air Rescue Service (ARS), were in a transition phase with retiring its HH-3 helicopters and did not have sufficient numbers of HH-60s to conduct the CSAR mission. The ARS and other services did not have the force structure to recover the estimated 40 aircraft per day losses for the initial operations of the Gulf War.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, the JFC relied mainly on AFSOF's and Army SOF's capability to fulfill the overland CSAR operations, while the Navy's HS units provided coverage beyond 12 miles in the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea.<sup>36</sup> AFSOF and Army SOF were tasked to conduct

CSAR late in the preparation and planning of the Gulf War. This, coupled with CSAR being a collateral mission, did not provide the JFC with a well-trained and equipped force for theater CSAR prior to the Gulf War. The C<sup>2</sup> was set up with the JFACC using a joint RCC (predecessor to the JSRC)<sup>37</sup> which was severely undermanned and caused numerous C<sup>2</sup> problems for the JFSOCC CSAR planning and execution. For example, one CSAR C<sup>2</sup> incident caused a 72 hour delay to launch one rescue.<sup>38</sup> The experience reveals the consequences of the lack of an overall CSAR commander, dedicated forces, and available CSAR C<sup>2</sup> capability. Unfortunately, the short duration of the war and relatively low shootdown rate did not generate an urgent need to overcome the problems.

Following the Gulf War, the Air Force's ARS took the place of SOF and was able to deploy rescue forces to Kuwait to provide CSAR for Operation Southern Watch. However, when the U.S. military became involved with combat operations in former Yugoslavia, the ARS and other services did not have enough CSAR forces to support both theaters.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, AFSOF was once again tasked to provide theater CSAR coverage. AFSOF provided Bosnia operations with a Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF) to accomplish the CSAR commitment. The JSOTF commander was normally dual-hatted as JFSOCC depending on SOF mission taskings. For over six years, the JSOTF utilized its dedicated SOCCE and SOLEs to coordinate CSAR with sister services operations and significantly developed a CSAR capability with its JSOTF operations. The Navy and Marine Corps provided some relief for AFSOF, but the services were unable to establish a capable CSAR force to relieve AFSOF permanently through Operation Allied Force.<sup>40</sup>

Once again, during combat operations over Serbia and Kosovo, AFSOF provided the CSAR core to the JFC. There were only two aircraft lost to enemy fire and both pilots were recovered successfully. During the F-117—Vega 31 CSAR mission, the priority to recover

the pilot was at the highest level due to his sensitive mission. Although the recovery of Vega 31 was successful, lessons learned from Operation Allied Force revealed the following crucial weaknesses that have not improved since the Gulf War:

- Dedicated CSAR forces to support CINC requirements must be designated, fully trained and available, preferably in theater.
- In lieu of dedicated in-theater forces, a "quick turn," deployable "911" rapid response rescue force, able to operate in the AOR within 72 hours of notification could provide the CINC CSAR forces.<sup>41</sup>

### *CSAR Today*

In 1999, based on the 1990's lessons learned, the DOD and its military leaders determined that CSAR was "broken" in the services and did not support the JFC.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, the DOD elevated the executive agent for personnel recovery responsibility to CINC U.S. Joint Forces Command (JFCOM), and established the Joint Personnel Recovery Agency (JPRA) as the OPR to address personal recovery matters. Recently, JPRA has been overseeing personnel recovery throughout the services and has made substantial improvements to joint CSAR training and employment. However, preliminary lessons learned from the planning and deployment of Operation Enduring Freedom have disclosed similar deficiencies remain within the services, which were not able to provide dedicated CSAR for the JFC. Within its organic capability, AFSOF was able to respond with an efficient CSAR force due to the AFSOC Commander establishing C<sup>2</sup> structures and alert forces within a JSOTF concept, "ready to deploy on short notice to any regional conflict."<sup>43</sup> According to JPRA, the CSAR organization in Afghanistan is classified, however, "it is safe to say AFSOF and Army SOF JSOTFs were the only forces available to provide the JFC with a capable CSAR force after September 11<sup>th</sup>."<sup>44</sup>

The present joint structure of CSAR inhibits the organization and integration of the services' capabilities. Based on experience, this complicated system has not provided the JFC with a standing CSAR capability. All the services provide a CSAR capability, but during peacetime no single service has the reigns of the services. During wartime, complicated doctrine, redundancy of C<sup>2</sup>, and unavailability of other forces have left the JFC to use SOF as the main CSAR provider. The solution to these problems lies in the creation of a Joint Combat Search and Rescue Task Force (JCSARTF) underneath the theater SOCs similar to a JSOTF.<sup>45</sup> This concept, coupled with combining AFSOF and Air Force CSAR forces underneath one commander, would meet the warfighting CINC's CSAR requirements.

### **III**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

During the past 10 years, CSAR concerns have surfaced throughout the services. The ineffective CSAR capabilities, organization, and C<sup>2</sup> structure have not enhanced CSAR unity of command and unity effort for the JFC. SOF continuously have been called upon to support the JFC's CSAR mission, and this will probably not change. The following recommendations are necessary to eliminate deficiencies and provide the JFCs with a ready CSAR force:

- Establish peacetime JCSARTF underneath theater SOCs
- Consolidate and organize all U.S. Air Force CSAR forces/equipment/funding with AFSOFs underneath SOCOM

A logical precursor to these recommendations would be to change SOCOM's CSAR mission to a primary mission. As previously discussed, theater SOCs have been accomplishing CSAR as a primary mission, but SOCOM can only train, equip, and organize SOF to conduct CSAR as a collateral mission. Changing SOCOM's CSAR mission to a

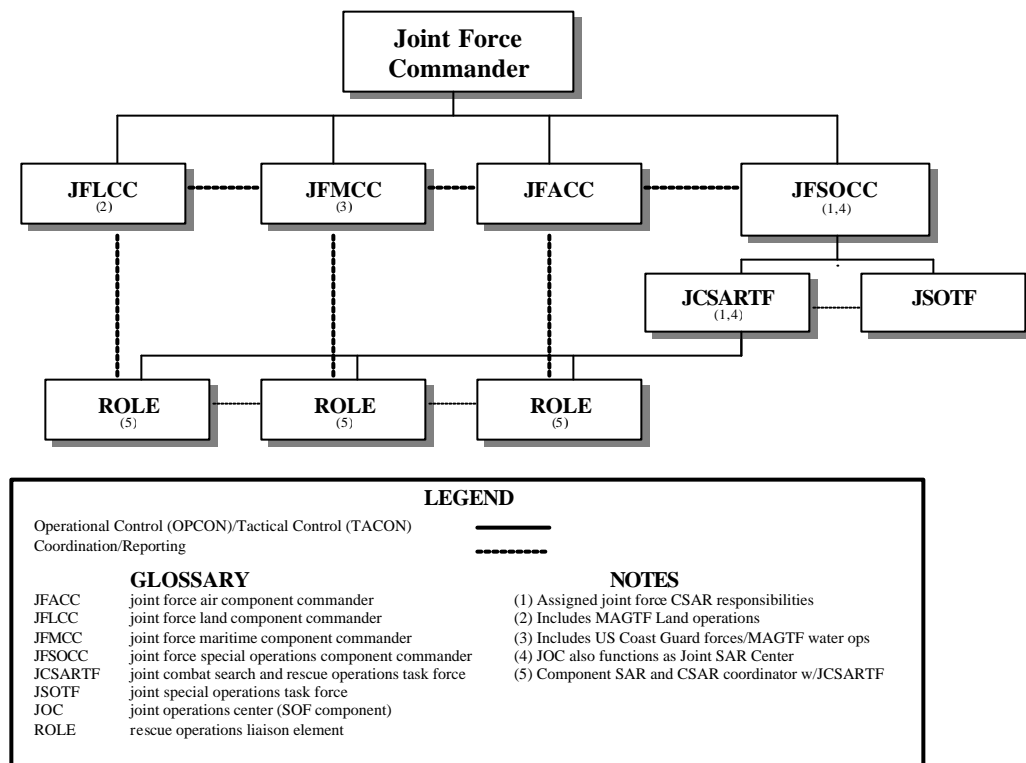
primary mission will enhance its priority within SOCOM and start the reorganization of CSAR within the theater SOC's. Also, this recommendation would boost the theater SOC's focus on the CSAR mission and increase its priority within its Mission Essential Task Lists.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, it would promote the integration of CSAR tactics, techniques, and procedures within SOF planning and joint mission employment. Primary mission status would eliminate any questions on the importance of CSAR and give SOF a sense of ownership for the CSAR mission. This change in mission tasking should result in a seamless transition and offer a good starting point to implement the JCSARTF concept within the theater SOC's.

#### *JCSARTF Concept Underneath Theater CINC's/SOC's*

A functional JCSARTF established in peacetime underneath the theater's SOC can provide the CINC's with capable CSAR forces ready for wartime. Within the CINC's force architecture, the JCSARTF structure can be designed similar to a JSOTF organization by designating representatives from the theater SOC, subordinate units, and other CSAR component C<sup>2</sup> capabilities.<sup>47</sup> For example, the Air Force maintains deployable JSRC C<sup>2</sup> packages and trained rescue coordinators that are readily available for CSAR operations. These capabilities were designed to provide the JSRC with a standing interoperable C<sup>2</sup> capability for the services. This existing capability can be integrated with SOF's Joint Operations Center (JOC) C<sup>2</sup> capability in order to give the theater SOC robust CSAR C<sup>2</sup>. These capabilities would create a joint C<sup>2</sup> core to assist the theater SOC's designated units within their operational CSAR mission.

To ensure an effective CSAR capability, the theater SOC must select units based on the capability to support a CINC's planned contingency operations. Once established, the theater SOC and subordinate unit commanders need to manage the dedicated CSAR force and verify that the units assets are not multi-tasked with SOF missions. Lessons learned from Operation

Allied Force indicated that sufficient numbers of forces were allocated to support special operations prior to the conflict. However, once the JSOTF in Italy was tasked with the CSAR mission, the SOF alert forces were, on occasion, allocated to multiple missions which could have created a detrimental situation for both missions.<sup>48</sup> If allocation problems exist, the theater SOC can request staff and unit augmentation from the CINC's staff or through SOCOM's chain of command as described in SOF doctrine.<sup>49</sup> Dedicated CSAR forces and a C<sup>2</sup> staff are key to implementing the JCSARTF concept ready for wartime. As in Figure 2, the proposed CSAR command relationships will flow directly to the JFSOCC.



**Figure 2. Proposed Operational CSAR C<sup>2</sup> Relationship/Organization**

The JFSOCC will use its established Joint Operations Center (JOC) for CSAR C<sup>2</sup> and rescue operations liaison elements (ROLE) to coordinate CSAR operations for all the service components. The ROLE would function in a manner similar to that of a SOLE in special operations.<sup>50</sup> ROLES would be responsible to integrate capabilities between the JCSARTF

and the service component's organic CSAR capability. The component commanders would only have to provide component representatives as liaison to the JOC in order to facilitate needs from both ends. This JCSARTF C<sup>2</sup> structure would eliminate the component commander's responsibilities to organize his own RCC and conduct the JTF's joint SAR center (JSRC) duties. This new CSAR C<sup>2</sup> process and organizational structure can be incorporated into the theater SOC's existing joint combined exercise training (JCET) program.<sup>51</sup> The JCET program can offer the JFC an opportunity to exercise the JCSARTF concept and identify CSAR limiting factors (LIMFACs), which should improve the interoperability within U.S. and foreign services.

One might argue that the theater SOC cannot supply sufficient forces to a JCSARTF concept, which would limit the SOC's ability to conduct SOF and CSAR missions simultaneously. However, consolidation of Air Force CSAR forces and AFSOF can create a versatile capability that will alleviate this concern.

#### *Consolidate Air Force CSAR Forces and AFSOF*

The Air Force's CSAR forces and AFSOF have similar principal and collateral missions. In examining both mission lists, one can see the redundancy not only in the area of CSAR but also in seven other missions.<sup>52</sup> For example, both organizations are tasked to support noncombatant evacuations (NEO) missions for the theater CINCs. Based on this premise and the redundancy of CSAR capability within the Air Force, both organizations should be reorganized underneath one command to achieve unity of command and unity of effort for the CSAR mission.

As discussed previously, since SOCOM has been the lead on providing CSAR to the theater CINCs, the reorganization should be established underneath SOCOM's primary CSAR provider—AFSOC.<sup>53</sup> This would launch a single advocate for CSAR and provide

unity of command and effort for the CSAR mission. In addition, the reorganizing of Air Force CSAR will offer the following advantages to the theater CINCs:

- Centralized training already in place
- Robust SOF and CSAR capability
- Supports JCSARTF and JSOTF concepts
- Dedicated CSAR capability for the theater CINC/JFC

Both AFSOC and ACC CSAR training programs are conducted at Kirtland Air Force Base with very similar training syllabi. The training organization is integrated with ACC and AFSOC personnel to conduct training underneath one Air Education and Training Command commander.<sup>54</sup> AFSOC already has a professional relationship with ACC and can provide an infrastructure that ACC CSAR forces are familiar with.

A disadvantage to consolidating Air Force CSAR and AFSOF might be the labeling of AFSOC as the only CSAR provider to the other services. Other services do need to maintain CSAR skills to integrate with the JTF and JCSARTF in order to conduct CSAR during suitable situations. Moreover, services' future taskings will not alleviate the requirement to maintain SAR capability for a benign environment.

Additional disadvantages should be identified during JFCOM's SAR exercises (SAREX) and managed through JPRA.<sup>55</sup> JFCOM is the DOD's joint force integrator and is responsible to improve personnel recovery capabilities throughout the services. JPRA is the "eyes and ears" for personnel recovery and can identify future LIMFACs once the consolidation of Air Force CSAR and AFSOF is accomplished.

The services and SOCOM have been squeezing their budgets to fund priorities. In addition, there are no indications that new equipment or units are being funded for dedicated CSAR capabilities. Therefore, the consolidation of CSAR forces in SOCOM will create



efficiencies that will compensate for CSAR shortages and provide a dedicated force for both CSAR and SOF missions in all threat environments. This recommendation would complement the JCSARTF force structure by providing the theater CINCs with a dedicated CSAR capability for future conflicts.

## **V**

### **CONCLUSION**

Throughout history, the U.S. military has inefficiently supported its armed forces with dedicated CSAR capabilities in either peacetime or wartime. During past major operations since the Gulf War, the services' joint CSAR capabilities have not been merged to form an effective dedicated CSAR "package" for the JTF. All services do provide an organic CSAR capability, but based on their inadequate assets and mission priorities, they have not been the JFC's first choice for the CSAR mission. To compensate, SOF have provided the JTF with a capable CSAR force during hostilities even though they are not organized, trained, and equipped to conduct CSAR as a primary mission. The JFC's CSAR mission capability has been surviving, but can be enhanced by placing one commander in charge during peacetime and wartime to ensure unity of command and unity of effort. As Professor Milan Vego states, "at the operational level and higher, success is difficult to achieve without having unity of effort through unity of command."<sup>56</sup>

Establishing a peacetime JCSARTF with dedicated forces under theater SOC's would meet the JFC's CSAR requirement for wartime. The JCSARTF would be organized symmetrically with a JSOTF and would provide a core of CSAR capabilities and C<sup>2</sup> structure to integrate component commanders' available CSAR capabilities. To support this JCSARTF, the consolidation of CSAR forces and SOF in the Air Force under one

commander will form commonality within the service and instill teamwork for the joint CSAR mission.

These recommendations would provide the warfighting CINCs with continuous dedicated CSAR forces. However, CSAR is a joint issue and will require the backing of all services to ensure a credible CSAR capability is provided for the combatant CINCs. The U.S. military has been fortunate in recent operations by having few POWs and isolated personnel situations. The recommendations in this paper will help ensure that this record will continue into the future.

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## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine for Joint Combat Search and Rescue, Joint Pub 3-50.2 (Washington, DC: 26 January 1996), I-1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> John W. Blumentritt, "Playing Defense and Offense: Employing Rescue Resources as Offensive Weapons," (Unpublished Research Paper, Air University, Maxwell AFB, AL: 1999), 40.

<sup>4</sup> Lessons learned Vietnam/Desert Shield/Desert Storm/Operation Allied Force, Navy Lessons Learned Database (S), Navy Development Command, May 2001.

<sup>5</sup> According Joint Pub 5-05, Special Operations Command Component Commanders (SOCC) are the theater SOCs for each geographic combatant commander. Creation of theater SOCs--to provide the necessary unity of command, each CINC has established a sub-unified command (i.e., Special Operations Command Europe--SOCEUR) to serve as the functional special operations component for the theater.

<sup>6</sup> Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) is SOCOM's Air Force component. Air Force CSAR forces reference the U.S. Air Force's Air Combat Command's CSAR forces. The Air Force has administrative control (ADCON) over both ACC and AFSOC forces. SOCOM trains and equips AFSOC and the Air Force trains and equips ACC CSAR. In the late 1980's both AFSOC and ACC CSAR forces were under the same organization--Air Rescue Service (ARS). Due to the brevity of this paper further data can be obtain in Joint Pubs.

<sup>7</sup> James E. Moentmann, "Joint Combat Search and Rescue—Operational Necessity or Afterthought?" Joint Forces Quarterly (Spring 1998): 44.

<sup>8</sup> Navy provided CSAR for the Vietnam's surrounding waters (i.e., Gulf of Tonkin and South China Sea)

<sup>9</sup> Victor E. Renuart, "Combat Search and Rescue: A Search For Tomorrow," (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA: 1992), 1.

<sup>10</sup> John R. Moulton, "Personnel Recovery and Repatriation Brief." (JPRA Brief: 2001)

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> In 1975 the S.S. Mayaguez/near Koh Tang Island was fired upon and boarded by Cambodians. The crew was eventually returned to their ship, however, simultaneously a massive effort to retaliate and rescue the crew was in progress. The U.S. force miscalculated the size of the Khmer Communist force on Koh Tang Island. Numerous incidents occurred during the mission to include a CH-53 getting shutdown. The mission was a great risk and resulted in 15 killed in action, 3 missing in action, and approximately 49 wounded—these numbers did not include the CH-53 crew and security police forces aboard. In 1979 a seizure of the U.S. Embassy in Teheran began the 444-day ordeal known at the Iranian hostage crisis. Desert One was the forward staging base (FSB) 200 miles southeast of Teheran to assemble and launch a rescue attempt. Operation Eagle Claw was the final plan to rescue the hostages. The rescue attempt never made it past the FSB due to an accident with a CH-53 hovering into a EC-130.

<sup>13</sup> Douglas C. Lovelace Jr., "Unification of the U.S. Armed Forces: Implementing the 1986 Department of Defense Reorganization Act," (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI:1996), 3.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Doctrine Development System, Joint Pub 1-01 (Washington DC: 29 July 2001), I-1.

<sup>16</sup> Joint Publication 3-50.2, i.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine for Joint Special Operations, Joint Pub 3-05 (Washington DC: 17 April 1998), III-5.

<sup>18</sup> Joint Publication 3-50.2, I-3.

<sup>19</sup> Diagram is an edited version from Joint Publication 3-50.2, III-2.

<sup>20</sup> CSAR doctrine describes the use of a CSAR task force (CSARTF)—ref: Joint Publication 3-50.2, II-6.. The CSARTF's description is tactical in nature and is not form until the rescue is required. JCSARTF described in this paper will address operational level issues which will provide the JFC with dedicated CSAR capability.

<sup>21</sup> Joint Publication 3-50.2, A-1.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Gregory Rucci, "Do we still need Navy CSAR (Combat Search and Rescue)?" U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings. (July 2000): 60.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>25</sup> The Navy has predominately HH-60 and MH-53 helicopters. Minimal amounts of helicopters are equipped with refueling probes. The lack of sufficient KC/HC-130 tanker support and aircrew training are also limitations to conduct long range CSAR missions.

<sup>26</sup> Matthew D. Redfern, "The JFC's Dilemma: The USMC TRAP Mission Verses the Combat SAR Mission," (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA: 1995), 11.

<sup>27</sup> Joint Publication 3-50.2, C-1.

<sup>28</sup> CSAR has been part of the Air Expeditionary Wing package—consists normally of a JSRC staff, four HH-60s, two HC-130s, and support personnel.

<sup>29</sup> J.W. Blumentritt, 81-82.

<sup>30</sup> J.R. Moulton, JPRA Brief.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., Up to 1999, the AF and ACC have been the executive agent and OPR for personnel recovery.

<sup>32</sup> Joint Publication 3-50.2, F-1.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> SOCOM has nine missions and CSAR is one of eight collateral missions. As per SOF Posture Statement-Primary/principle missions: Counter proliferation, Combating Terrorism, Foreign Internal Defense, Special Reconnaissance, Direct Action, Psychological Operations, Civil Affairs, Unconventional Warfare, and Information Operations. Collateral Missions: Coalition Support, **CSAR**, Counterdrug Activities, Humanitarian Demining, Humanitarian Assistance, Security Assistance, and Special Activities.

<sup>35</sup> U.S. Department of Defense. Gulf War Survey, Volume IV, (Unclassified Edition), Government Printing Office. (Washington DC: 1993), 300.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 301.

<sup>37</sup> (the predecessor to the current JSRC--see Figure 1).

<sup>38</sup> Benjamin F. Schemmer, "No USAF Combat Rescue Aircraft in Gulf: It Took 72 Hours to Launch One Rescue," Armed Forces Journal International, (July 1991): 37.

<sup>39</sup> Lessons Learned Operation Joint Endeavor/Bosnia Operations, Naval Lessons Learned Database (S), Navy Development Command, May 2001.

<sup>40</sup> Lessons Learned Operation Allied Force, Naval Lessons Learned Database (S), Navy Development Command, May 2001.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> General John W. Handy, USAF/CV, speech at the 2001 DOD Personnel Recovery Conference (After Action Report).

<sup>43</sup> Thom Shanker, "Conduct Of War Is Redefined By Success Of Special Forces," New York Times, 21 January, 2002, p.1.

<sup>44</sup> Glenn Hecht, Joint Personnel Recovery Agency—J-3, telephone conversation, 17 December 2001.

<sup>45</sup> JSOTF is structured with one commander. According to Joint Pub 3-05, Doctrine for Joint Special Operations--"A JSOTF is normally formed around elements from the theater SOC or an existing SOF unit with augmentation from other service SOF. A JSOTF may also be specifically established as a joint organization and deployed as a complete package from outside of the theater." If the JFC's mission does not dictate a JSOTF, then the JCSARTF would function by itself and directly report to the JFC (i.e., like a Joint Psychological Operations Task Force).

<sup>46</sup> Theater SOC's have CSAR as a mission within their Mission Essential Task List (METL). METLs direct subordinate commander's mission priorities for training.

<sup>47</sup> According to Joint Pub 3-05, Doctrine for Joint Special Operations--"A JSOTF is normally formed around elements from the theater SOC or an existing SOF unit with augmentation from other service SOF. A JSOTF may also be specifically established as a joint organization and deployed as a complete package from outside of the theater. If the JFC's mission does not dictate a JSOTF, then the JCSARTF would function by itself and directly report to the JFC (i.e., like a Joint Psychological Operations Task Force).

<sup>48</sup> Lessons Learned Operation Allied Force, Naval Lessons Learned Database (S), Navy Development Command, May 2001.

<sup>49</sup> USCINCSOC as a supporting commander can provide SOF to the commanders of other combatant commands for operational employment. Reference Joint Publication 3-05, III-1.

<sup>50</sup> ROLE will function as a SOLE does for special operations. Liaison elements are responsible to coordinate, deconflict, and integrate special operations air and surface operations between the task force (JSOTF) and the service components. ROLES would function similar, while integrating CSAR capabilities between the JCSARTF and the service component's organic CSAR capabilities.

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<sup>51</sup> According to SOCOM Posture Statement 2000: p.9—SOF joint training is primarily accomplished through JCETs sponsored by CJCS and CINCUSOCOM. Through SOF participation in over 60 CJCS exercises and 200 JCETs annually, geographic CINC needs are met.

<sup>52</sup> According to Air Force Doctrine Document 2-1.6, Air Force CSAR forces primary mission is personnel recovery. It also lists seven collateral missions: civil search and rescue, emergency aeromedical evacuation, disaster relief, international aid, noncombatant evacuation operations, counterdrug activities, and space shuttle support. SOCOM/AFSOC has nine missions and CSAR is one of eight collateral missions. As per SOF Posture Statement-Primary/principle missions: Counter proliferation, Combating Terrorism, Foreign Internal Defense, Special Reconnaissance, Direct Action, Psychological Operations, Civil Affairs, Unconventional Warfare, and Information Operations. Collateral Missions: Coalition Support, CSAR, Counterdrug Activities, Humanitarian Demining, Humanitarian Assistance, Security Assistance, and Special Activities. Reference SOCOM Posture Statement 2000, p. 43-44 for descriptions of primary/principle missions.

<sup>53</sup> When both SOF and CSAR missions are assigned to SOCOM/theater SOC, AFSOC forces have been the primary CSAR provider to the JTF and theater SOC.

<sup>54</sup> Air Education and Training Command (AETC) is the Air Force's major command which conducts its service's basic and mission training programs. CSAR mission training is conducted at Kirtland AFB for both ACC and AFSOC underneath the same wing—58<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Wing (SOW).

<sup>55</sup> For example, Millennium Challenge '02 is sponsored by JFCOM, which is designed to integrate the services in a joint mission including a CSAR scenario. The joint CSAR mission will be analyzed by JPRA and will determine/report the effectiveness of the mission.

<sup>56</sup> Milan Vego, Operational Warfare. (U.S. Naval Warfare. Newport, RI: 2000), 187.